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INDONESIA - Dili (East Timor) - 12.10.1989
Homily

OUTLINE

The Catholic community of East Timor is called to be "salt of the earth" and "light of the world". By walking the path of love and forgiveness, may all parties work for a just and peaceful resolution of present difficulties.

1. "You are the salt of the earth ... You are the light of the world" (Mt 5:13-14):
   - As the Successor of Peter the Holy Father repeats these words of Christ today to the people of East Timor;
   - His sole purpose in coming is to express love and encouragement to all the Church's sons and daughters here;
   - He thanks all those who have made difficult journeys and expresses gratitude to all who have worked to make his visit possible.

2. The Holy Father explains the evangelical meaning of "salt" and "light":
   - "Salt" refers to spiritual wholeness and the duty of Christians to enliven and elevate humanity with divine grace;
   - "Light" refers to the wisdom that comes from living and that leads people to God;
   - The wisdom of the saints, in particular, shines in the Church and in the world.

3. "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7):
   - All work to build up the Church through a variety of ministries and through Christian witness;
   - The Church is both universal and local.

4. East Timor is much in need of Christian love and healing:
   - For many years East Timor has experienced a lack of peace and stability;
   - A solution will be found only by a concerted effort to return to normalcy, based on respect for rights;
   - East Timor can find peace through the reasonable mutual accommodation of rights and duties, of legitimate aspirations and realistic expectations.

5. The cultural tradition of the people of East Timor is rooted in the Gospel:
   - The ecclesial community of Dili should be of one heart and one mind in order to live the evangelical commandment of love;
   - No matter what the conflict, Christians must heed Christ's command to love enemies and to forgive injuries;
   - Education for a strong family life and honesty in human affairs is an important element of the call to holiness;
   - All should be united with the Bishop and priests;
   - Timor, strong in the charism of evangelical love, is certainly capable of fulfilling its mission to be "salt of the earth" and "light of the world".

6. Christ calls the Catholics of Timor to be "light", and he is also present with his grace:
   - Mary intercedes for the spiritual healing of her Timorese sons and daughters;
   - The whole people of God in Timor will repeat the words of the Psalm: "Bless the Lord ..." (Ps 103/104:1).

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Maun alin no bin feton sira,

(Dear Brothers and Sisters,)

1. "Imi masin rai nian ...

Imi naroman mundo nian" (Mt 5:13-14).

("You are the salt of the earth ...
you are the light of the world" (Mt 5:13-14).

Lia fuan hirak ne'e, Jesus nia Lia fuan, nebe hato'o ba nia escolanta sira. Ohin Amo Bispo Roma nian, hato'o ba imi. Cristo nia escolante iha Timor loro sa'e, Diocese Dili. Hosi lia fuan hirak ne'e, ita moris hamutuk iha dalan ida deit; hosi lia fuan hirak ne'e ita simu naroman atu moris nudar sarani.

Nudar Amo Bispo Roma nian no S. Pedro nia saseluk, hau hato'o hau lia Knolok nian ba imi hotu nebe halibur an iha ne'e, hosi Dili, hosi Atambua no hosi Kupang. Ba'u hato'o, hau nia Saudacao ba Administrador Apostolico Dili nian, Bispo Belo, ba Bispo Pain Ratu no Manteiro no Nai Sulik sira hotu, Religioso hotu - hotu no sarani tomak iha Diocese rai Timor nia laran.

Imi wain mai hosi dok no susar no terus hosi imi uma kain, hosi Timor loro sa'e no Loro monu atu hasoru hamutuk ho Amo Papa. Hau fo obrigado ba imi hotu, liu-liu ba imi nebe serviso maka'as atu ohin ita bele hasoru malu.

(These are the words of Jesus to his first disciples. And today the Bishop of Roma addresses them to you. Christ's disciples in East Timor, in the Diocese of Dili. Through these words we are united in a common vocation; from them we learn what it means to live as Christians.

As Bishop of Rome and the Successor of Saint Peter, I make these words my greeting to all who are gathered here from Dili, from Atambua and from Kupang. I offer greetings to the Apostolic Administrator of Dili, Bishop Belo, to Bishops Pain Ratu and Manteiro, and to all the clergy, religious and laity of the Dioceses of Timor.

Many of you have made long and difficult journeys from your villages in both East and West Timor to be with the Pope. I thank you all, especially those who have worked to make this occasion possible.)

Dear brothers and sisters: Peter's special ministry to "strengthen his brethren" has brought me to East Timor today. It was to Peter that Christ said before the Passion: "when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren" (Lk 22:32). During the Master's Passion Peter had been weak, but the Lord called him, nevertheless, to shepherd the flock (cf. Jn 21:15-19) and for this he gave him a special grace to become "light" and "salt" in the service of all who believe in Christ. I come to you as a witness of Christ and an

elder in the family of the faith (cf. 1 Pet 5:1). From the very beginning of my Pontificate I have followed your situation with deep concern. It has long been my wish to express to you that the whole Church, and the Pope in a particular way, holds you in esteem and in affection. Now I am filled with joy at being able to celebrate this Eucharist with you here at Tasi-Tolu.

2. Let us consider the meaning that Jesus attaches to the images "salt of the earth" and "light of the world". In Timor you are very familiar with salt. You extract it along the coastal plains of Cassaid, Tibar, Manatuto, Sical and from the salt lake at Laga. Salt preserves food and enhances its flavour. In the Gospel "salt" refers to preservation from the corruption of sin and death. It refers to the spiritual wholeness of every disciple whose duty it is to enliven and elevate humanity with the assistance of divine grace.

The image of "light" refers not only to the wisdom that comes from the revelation of divine truth, but also to everyday wisdom in action. It is the wisdom that comes from the experience of life as well as the wisdom that gives life: the wisdom that enlightens those who live by faith. Wherever this "light" is found it shapes human life and conduct, and leads people to God.

This is the wisdom that marks the lives of the saints. That is why each saint is a light that cannot be hidden "under a bushel", but must be put "on a stand, where it gives light to all in the house" (cf. Mt 5:15). The saints give light to all of us in the Church, which is God's House on this earth. And many times their light shines beyond the Church to other people and places.

3. The words "you are the salt of the earth ... you are the light of the world" are directed by the Lord to all his disciples, to all those who "by one Spirit were baptized into one body" (1 Cor 12:13), which is the Church. To the eyes of the world, the Church is a visible society of people. But by faith we know that this Church is also the Body of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

By the power of that same Spirit, all of us work together in building up the Church through a "variety of ministries" and through Christian witness in keeping with each one's particular vocation (cf. 1 Cor 12:4-7). This is so because "to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor 12:7). Therefore when we hear Christ's call to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the

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world" we help to build up the Church not only in our local communities, but as the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church spread throughout the world. For the Church is one in all the earth and the same in every place. She is both "universal" and "local". Such is the result of the Spirit's action, in which is manifested "the same God who inspires everything in everyone" (cf. 1 Cor 12:6).

4. What does it mean to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" in East Timor today? For many years now, you have experienced destruction and death as a result of conflict; you have known what it means to be victims of hatred and struggle. Many innocent people have died, while others have been prey to retaliation and revenge. For too long you have been suffering a lack of stability which has rendered your future uncertain. This distressing situation causes economic difficulties which, in spite of some relief, still exist, preventing the development needed to alleviate the burden which still weighs heavily on the population.

Respect for the rights which render life more human must be firmly ensured: the rights of individuals and the rights of families. I pray that those who have responsibility for life in East Timor will act with wisdom and good will towards all, as they search for a just and peaceful resolution of present difficulties in order to bring about a speedy improvement of conditions of life which will permit you to live in social harmony, according to your own traditions and requirements, in serene and fruitful productivity.

5. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: Who will be the salt that preserves life in the midst of death, if not you? Who will be a light that radiates wisdom in the midst of darkness, if not you who have remained steadfast in the faith since the Gospel was first preached here four centuries ago? Your land is much in need of Christian healing and reconciliation. But the ecclesial community itself must be a reconciled community if it is to fulfil the important role that springs from Christ's words: "you are the salt ... you are the light". It is not always easy to find the courage, determination and patience needed for reconciliation. Yet we know in faith that love transcends every boundary between nations, peoples, and cultures. No matter what the differences, no matter what the grievances or injuries, we who are Christ's followers must take to heart his words: "Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Lk 6:37); "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Mt 5:44).

You who are Catholics in East Timor have a tradition in which family life, education and social customs are deeply rooted in the Gospel. and this tradition is a great part of your identity. Yours is a tradition imbued with the teachings and spirit of the Beatitudes, one of humble trust in God, of mercy and forgiveness, and, when necessary, of patient suffering in time of trial (cf. Mt 5:3-10). There are situations in which the ecclesial community needs to be especially capable of living the evangelical message of love and reconciliation. The strength to do so comes from interior conversion. Only when we are reborn in the Spirit do we understand the force of the Gospel words: "Blessed are the meek ... Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness ... Blessed are the peacemakers ..." (ibid. vv. 5,6,9). The call to be "salt" and "light" is no easy task. It is nothing less than the call to be fully "mature in Christ" (Col 1:28).

Furthermore, your parishes, your catechesis, your Catholic schools, your small communities and other forms of association, all have a role to play in educating for a strong family life which respects God's plan for life and love, for honesty and competence in [illegible] areas of human endeavour. You must show yourselves worthy of your Christian calling, which is a call to holiness, to prayer, to the practice of the sacraments and to the self-sacrifice without which discipleship is impossible. I urge you to persevere in your calling. I exhort you all to live "in the bond of peace", in union with the Pope and with the Apostolic Administrator and priests of your Diocese, who have been so generous in their work in these difficult years. The Lord who sees and knows all things will reward the Religious Brothers and Sisters, and those members of the laity who have been specially committed to serving the needs of others. A special word of esteem must go to the valiant missionaries who have stayed near to the people in the most trying moments of your recent history, bearing witness to the love that they have for the Church, for the pilgrim People of God in Timor.

I am aware that the theme for your weekly Holy Hours in preparation for my visit has been: 'NEON IDA DEIT, LARAN IDA DEIT' (cf. Acts 4:32). These words indicate the path which the Church in Dili must follow in order to respond to the special challenges of today. Unity in faith, expressed and nourished especially in

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Eucharistic Communion, will lead you to a communion of charity and solidarity with others, and will help you to live the evangelical commandment of love through the practical works of mercy and justice needed on this Island. Timor, strong in evangelical love, is certainly capable of fulfilling its mission to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world".

6. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Mt 5:16).

It is not the Pope alone who calls you to this task. These are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ himself. He challenges you, but he also promises his presence and his grace. He is with you always.

And there is someone else who accompanies the people of Timor on their pilgrimage as they journey day by day to God's Kingdom: Mary, your Mother in the Church. Mary of the Immaculate Conception, the patroness of the Diocese of Dili and of your new Cathedral, which I have been happy to bless today. She intercedes for the spiritual healing of her Timorese sons and daughters. The Catholics of East Timor who have sung her praises down the centuries can be sure of her maternal care at this time of uncertainty and much needed reconciliation and peace.

On life's pilgrimage, walk with Mary. Then, following her example, and filled with the Spirit "who renews the face of the earth" (Ps 103/104:30), the whole People of God in Timor will repeat the joyful words of the Responsorial Psalm:

"Bless the Lord, my soul! ...
May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!" (Ps 103/104:1,31).

Tabes, atu Eucaristia nebe oras ne'e ita halo daudaun, bele tulun ema hotu iha rai ida ne'e, atu hotu bele nakfilak an los liu "ho fuan ida no nean ida", nudar kota hari iha foho leten, nebe la monu, nudar naroman nebe leno ema hotu iha uma laran. Atu Espirito lia los nian bele lori ba rohan Knar ida ne'e. Amen.

(Yes, may the Eucharist which we are now celebrating help the people of this Island to be ever more truly "of one heart and one mind" - as a city set on a hill which cannot be hid, as a light which gives light to all in the house. May the Spirit of truth accomplish this saving work. Amen.)

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DOCUMENTAÇÃO

VISITA PASTORALE DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II A SEOUL (COREA), IN INDONESIA, ALLA DIOCESI DI DILI (TIMOR ORIENTALE) E IN MAURITIUS

6-16 OTTOBRE 1989

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